



## San Diego Takes the Initiative on Water Reclamation

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***Alison St John***

The city of San Diego will be the first city in the state to experiment with a kind of water reclamation called “indirect potable reuse.”

KPBS reporter Alison St John explains.

The cost of importing water is escalating and San Diego is at the end of the pipe line. So the city will invest in a demonstration project to prove it can safely recycle water to drinking standard or “potable” levels.

Orange County recently began recycling to potable levels, but it sends the reclaimed water to store in ground water basins.

Jim Barrett, head of Public Utilities, says the goal of San Diego city’s pilot project is to prove its recycled water is clean enough to return to its reservoirs.

**Barrett:** Nobody else in the State of California is doing it yet. There are some folks in Fairfax County in Virginia that have been doing it for about 30 years. Australia has been doing it for a while, Singapore’s been doing it, but nobody in California.

Barrett says San Diego has to get the go ahead from the State Department of Health before deciding whether to expand “ indirect potable reuse.”

The demonstration project will cost about \$11 million ... the next step would mean an investment of up to \$300 million.